



Nurses working in a makeshift maternity ward in the basement of a hospital in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, on Wednesday. Lynsey Addario for The New York Times

The director general of the World Health Organization called on Wednesday for the establishment of corridors in Ukraine for humanitarian workers and medical supplies to reach hospitals and people in need.

The official, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said that Ukraine faced a particular need for oxygen because three major oxygen plants had closed over security concerns. He said he was also deeply concerned about reports of attacks on health facilities and health workers since Russia invaded the country a week ago.

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Oracle, the enterprise software company, said it had "suspended all operations" in Russia.



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**Washington firms are rushing to provide free PR and lobbying to Ukraine.**





Sergiy Kyslytsya, Ukraine's ambassador to the United Nations, received speechwriting help by a political consulting firm. Eduardo Munoz/Reuters

The Ukrainian government has been receiving free assistance in its legal and public relations campaigns against Russia from influential Washington firms, and more offers of free help have been rolling in, according to people familiar with the arrangements.

The political consulting and government relations firm SKDK, which maintains close ties to President Biden's White House, helped write speeches that Ukraine's ambassador to the United Nations delivered to the General Assembly and Security Council in the last week, according to a filing with the Justice Department.

And the Washington-based international law and lobbying firm, Covington & Burling, has filed a claim on behalf of Ukraine against Russia with the International Court of Justice.

"There are so many people working pro bono right now that I just can't keep up," said Andrew Mac, an American lawyer who has been working without pay as a lobbyist and non-staff adviser to President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine since late 2019. "I am getting calls left and right."

Mr. Mac works for a Ukrainian law firm, Asters, that had a contract to work with the country's Ministry of Justice. He said payments to the firm had been suspended while the government is redirecting spending to its defense.

Daniel Vajdich, a lobbyist who had been paid to represent Ukraine's oil and gas industry and a Ukrainian civil society nonprofit organization, said he is working for free for both clients now.

He is lobbying the United States' government to impose additional sanctions on Russia's financial and energy sectors.

"To stop Putin, we will have to do this and make some of our own economic sacrifices in the process," Mr. Vajdich said.

The assistance is being offered as Ukraine presses for more support from other nations to defend against a Russian invasion that has already killed thousands of people.

But working for free for a besieged U.S. ally could also generate good will for the Washington firms, which sometimes come under scrutiny for representing clients with checkered reputations.

The willingness to help Ukraine stands in contrast to the rush among many businesses to distance themselves from Russia. A number of law and lobbying firms dropped lucrative contracts with Russia-linked banks and companies as the Biden administration rolled out sanctions against Russian banks and oligarchs.

SKDK, which is run in part by the former Biden White House adviser Anita Dunn, indicated in lobbying filings this week that it had "agreed to provide, on a pro-bono basis, speech writing support" to Sergiy Kyslytsya, Ukraine's ambassador to the U.N.

The firm's point person on the effort was Stephen Krupin, who had served as a senior speechwriter to former President Barack Obama.

In one of the speeches that SKDK helped craft, Mr. Kyslytsya chastised Russia for unprovoked aggression and pleaded for more international support. "Have no illusions," he said. "If Ukraine does not survive, we cannot be surprised if democracy fails next."

Covington & Burling, which previously represented the Ukrainian state-owned oil company Naftogaz, wrote in its filing before the International Criminal Court that Russia has "no lawful basis to take action in and against Ukraine for the purpose of preventing and punishing any purported genocide."